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9 Health Benefits of Eating Eggs

Medically reviewed by Imashi Fernando, MS, RDN, CDCES — By Kris Gunnars, BSc — Updated on December 20, 2022

Eggs are one of the few foods that should be classified as “superfoods.” They are loaded with nutrients, some of which are rare in the modern diet. Here are 9 health benefits of eggs that have been confirmed in human studies.

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1. Incredibly nutritious

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Eggs are among the most nutritious foods on the planet.

A whole egg contains all the nutrients required to turn a single cell into a baby chicken.

A single large boiled egg contains (1, 2):

- **Vitamin A:** 8% of the DV (daily value)
- **Folate:** 6% of the DV
- **Pantothenic acid (vitamin B5):** 14% of the DV
- **Vitamin B12:** 23% of the DV
- **Riboflavin (vitamin B2):** 20% of the DV
- **Phosphorus:** 7% of the DV
- **Selenium:** 28% of the DV
- Eggs also contain decent amounts of vitamin D, vitamin E, vitamin B6, calcium and zinc

This comes with 78 calories, 6 grams of protein and 5 grams of fat.

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In fact, eggs are pretty much the perfect food. They contain a little bit of almost every nutrient you need.

If you can get your hands on pastured or omega-3 enriched eggs, these are even more nutrient dense. They contain higher amounts of omega-3 fat and are much higher in vitamin A and E (2, 3).

SUMMARY

Whole eggs are among the most nutritious foods on the planet, containing a little bit of almost every nutrient you need. Omega-3 enriched and/or pastured eggs contain more of certain nutrients.

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2. High in cholesterol, but don't adversely affect blood cholesterol

It is true that eggs are high in cholesterol. In fact, a single egg contains 186 mg (1).

However, it's important to keep in mind that cholesterol in the diet may

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The liver actually produces large amounts of cholesterol every single day. In fact, when you eat more cholesterol, your liver has the ability to regulate cholesterol levels by producing less to even it out (5, 7).

Nevertheless, the response to eating eggs varies between individuals (8):

- In 70% of people, eating cholesterol may not raise blood cholesterol or only mildly raise it (termed “hypo responders”)
- In the other 30% of the population (termed “hyper responders”), eggs or other sources of dietary cholesterol may lead to a large rise in blood cholesterol

However, people with genetic disorders like familial hypercholesterolemia or carriers of a gene variant called APOE4 may want to consider eating eggs in moderation.

SUMMARY

Eggs are high in cholesterol, but eating eggs does not adversely affect cholesterol in the blood for the majority of people.

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3. Raise HDL (the “good”) cholesterol

HDL stands for high-density lipoprotein. It is often known as the “good” cholesterol (9).

People who have higher levels of HDL usually have a lower risk of heart disease, stroke and other health problems (10, 11, 12).

Eating eggs is a great way to increase HDL. In one study, eating 1-3 eggs daily for four weeks increased HDL levels by 6-13% in young, healthy adults (13, 14, 15).

> **SUMMARY**
>
> Eating eggs consistently leads to elevated levels of HDL (the “good”) cholesterol, which which has historically been linked to a lower risk of many diseases.

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4. Contain choline — an important nutrient that most people don’t get enough of

Choline is a nutrient that most people don’t even know exists, yet it is an incredibly important substance and is often grouped with the B vitamins.

Choline is used to build cell membranes and has a role in producing signaling molecules in the brain, along with various other functions (16).

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choline.

Whole eggs are an excellent source of choline. A single egg contains more than 100 mg of this very important nutrient.

> **SUMMARY**
>
> Eggs are among the best dietary sources of choline, a nutrient that is incredibly important but most people aren't getting enough of.

5. Are linked to a reduced risk of heart disease

LDL cholesterol is generally known as the "bad" cholesterol.

It is well known that having high levels of LDL is linked to an increased risk of heart disease (17, 18).

But many people don't realize that LDL is divided into subtypes based on the size of the particles.

There are *small, dense* LDL particles and *large* LDL particles.

Many studies have shown that people who have predominantly small, dense LDL particles have a higher risk of heart disease than people who have mostly large LDL particles (19, 20).

Even if eggs tend to mildly raise LDL cholesterol in some people, it is thought that eating eggs tend to mainly increase large (or "more buoyant") LDL levels instead of the small, dense LDL particles, which may explain the association with reduced risk of heart disease (21, 22).

However, some recent studies have found egg consumption to be linked

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egg consumption to heart health (23, 24, 25).

SUMMARY

Egg consumption appears to change the pattern of LDL particles from small, dense LDL (bad) to large LDL, which is linked to a reduced heart disease risk. But more research is needed.

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6. Contain lutein and zeaxanthin — antioxidants that have major benefits for eye health

One of the consequences of aging is that eyesight tends to get worse.

There are several nutrients that help counteract some of the degenerative processes that can affect our eyes.

Two of these are called lutein and zeaxanthin. They are powerful antioxidants that accumulate in the retina of the eye (25, 26).

Studies show that consuming adequate amounts of these nutrients can significantly reduce the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration, two

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In one older study, eating 1 egg daily for 5 weeks increased blood levels of lutein by 26% and zeaxanthin by 38% in older adults (30).

Eggs are also high in vitamin A, which deserves another mention here. Vitamin A deficiency is the most common cause of blindness in the world (31).

SUMMARY

The antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin are very important for eye health and can help prevent macular degeneration and cataracts. Eggs are good sources of both antioxidants.

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7. Omega-3 or pastured eggs lower triglycerides

Not all eggs are created equal. Their nutrient composition varies depending on how the hens were fed and raised.

Eggs from hens that were raised on pasture and/or fed omega-3 enriched feeds tend to be much higher in omega-3 fatty acids.

Omega-3 fatty acids are known to reduce blood levels of triglycerides, a well known risk factor for heart disease (32, 33).

Studies show that consuming omega-3 enriched eggs is a very effective way to lower blood triglycerides. In one older study, eating just five omega-3 enriched eggs per week for three weeks reduced triglycerides by 16–18% (34).

More recently, a small 2020 study of 20 participants found eating 2 omega-3 enriched eggs daily for five weeks reduced triglycerides by 10% (35).

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SUMMARY

Omega-3 enriched and pastured eggs may contain significant amounts of omega-3 fatty acids. Eating these types of eggs is an effective way to reduce blood triglycerides.

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8. High in quality protein, with all the essential amino acids in the right ratios

Proteins are the main building blocks of the human body.

They're used to make all sorts of tissues and molecules that serve both structural and functional purposes.

Getting enough protein in the diet is very important and studies show that currently recommended amounts may be too low (36, 37).

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six grams of it.

Eggs also contain all the essential amino acids in the right ratios, so your body is well-equipped to make full use of the protein in them.

Eating enough protein can help with weight loss, increase muscle mass, lower blood pressure and optimize bone health, to name a few (38, 39, 40, 41).

SUMMARY

Eggs are fairly high in quality animal protein and contain all the essential amino acids that humans need.

9. Are filling and tend to make you eat fewer calories, helping you lose weight

Eggs are incredibly filling. They are a high-protein food, and protein is, by far, the most satiating macronutrient (42, 43, 44).

Eggs score high on a scale called the satiety index, which measures the ability of foods to cause feelings of fullness and reduce later calorie intake (45).

In one study of 50 overweight and obese adults, eating eggs and toast instead of cereal and milk with orange juice decreased feelings of hunger following the meal, prolonged the period of not being hungry and made them eat ~180 calories less at lunch 4 hours later (46).

In another study, eating eggs was associated with a 38% lower risk of excessive body fat and a 34% lower risk of central obesity, or visceral fat around your abdomen area, which is a known risk factor for metabolic syndrome (47).

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SUMMARY

Eggs are highly satiating and may reduce calorie intake later in the day. Regularly eating eggs may promote weight loss.

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The bottom line

Studies clearly show that eating up to three whole eggs per day is perfectly safe.

There is no evidence that going beyond that is harmful — it is just "uncharted territory," as it hasn't been studied.

Eggs are pretty much nature's perfect food.

On top of everything else, they are also cheap, easy to prepare, go with

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Ceptional Superfood

Medically reviewed by Marie Lorraine Johnson MS, RD, CPT — By Kris Gunnars, BSc — Updated on September 12, 2023

Many healthy foods have been unfairly demonized in the past, including coconut oil, cheese and unprocessed meat.

But among the worst examples are the false claims about eggs, which are one of the healthiest foods on the planet.

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Eggs do not cause heart disease

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Historically, eggs have been considered unhealthy because they contain cholesterol.

A large egg contains 207 mg of cholesterol, which is a lot compared to most other foods (1).

However, many studies have shown that the dietary cholesterol in eggs does not adversely affect cholesterol levels in the blood.

In fact, eggs raise your “good” HDL cholesterol and change your “bad” LDL cholesterol from small and dense to large, which is benign (2, 3, 4).

One analysis of 23 studies on egg consumption and health discovered that consumption of 2 or more eggs a day was not associated with increased cardiovascular risk compared to one or no eggs. In fact, higher egg consumption was associated with a decreased risk of coronary artery disease (5).

What’s more, multiple other studies have led to the same conclusion (6, 7).

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SUMMARY

Despite incorrect assumptions about eggs in the past, eating them has no association with heart disease.

Eggs are rich in unique antioxidants

Eggs are particularly rich in the two antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin ([8]).

These antioxidants gather in the retina of the eye where they protect against harmful sunlight and reduce the risk of eye diseases like macular degeneration and cataracts ([9], [10], [11]).

In one study, supplementing with an average of 1.3 egg yolks per day for 4.5 weeks increased blood levels of lutein by 28–50% and zeaxanthin by 114–142% ([12]).

If you want to learn about other foods that are good for your eye health, check out this article.

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SUMMARY

Eggs contain large amounts of the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin, both of which dramatically lower your risk of age-related eye disorders.

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Eggs are among the most nutritious foods on the planet

Just think about it, one egg contains all the nutrients and building blocks required to grow a baby chicken.

Eggs are loaded with high-quality proteins, vitamins, minerals, good fats and various trace nutrients.

A large egg contains (1):

- Only 74 calories, with 5 grams of fat and 6 grams of protein with all 9 essential amino acids.
- Rich in iron, phosphorus, selenium and vitamins A, B12, B2 and B5 (among others).

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If you decide to include eggs in your diet, make sure to eat omega-3-enriched or pastured eggs. They are much more nutritious.

Make sure to eat the yolks, since they contain pretty much all the nutrients.

SUMMARY

Eggs contain all 9 essential amino acids, are highly concentrated with vitamins and minerals and are among the best sources of choline you can get. Omega-3-enriched or pastured eggs are the best.

Eggs are filling and help you lose weight

Eggs score high on a scale called the satiety index, which means that eggs are particularly good at making you feel full and eat fewer overall calories (6).

Also, they only contain trace amounts of carbohydrates, which means they will not raise your blood glucose levels.

In a study in 30 overweight or obese women that ate either a bagel or eggs for breakfast, the egg group ended up eating less during lunch, the rest of the day and for the next 36 hours (13).

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either two eggs (340 calories) or bagels for breakfast (14).

After eight weeks, the egg-eating group experienced the following:

- 61% greater reduction in BMI
- 65% more weight loss
- 34% greater reduction in waist circumference
- 16% greater reduction in body fat

This difference was significant even though both breakfasts contained the same number of calories.

Put simply, eating eggs is an excellent weight loss strategy on a reduced-calorie diet.

> **SUMMARY**
>
> Eggs are a nutritious, protein-rich food with a strong impact on satiety. Studies show that eating eggs for breakfast can help you lose weight.

An egg-ceptional superfood

Eggs are exceptionally nutritious, weight-loss friendly and high in antioxidants.

If you need any more reasons to eat eggs, they are also cheap, go with almost any food and taste great.

If any food deserves to be called a superfood, it's eggs.

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